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ABSTRACT

This report presents an interim analysis by an independent commission of current moves to reform Chapter 1 of the Hawkins/Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988. Chapter 1 is the largest federal assistance program to elementary school and secondary school education. The report responds to questions on strengthening Chapter 1 and summarizes the commission's position on critical issues affecting disadvantaged children. Following an introduction, a section on need discusses the successes of Chapter 1 in improving basic skill delivery to students as well as the need to reorient Chapter 1 services to support the teaching of higher order skills. A section on philosophy and goals outlines a proposed new direction based on evidence that all children can achieve at advanced as well as basic levels. Another section suggests major objectives and how they might be connected. The objectives include the following: (1) new standards for real world competencies in reading, mathematics, and science; (2) greater targeting of Chapter 1 funds to schools with large concentrations of poverty; (3) increased funding of professional and school development; (4) increased school capacity through increased parent involvement; (5) an outcome-based system of accountability; and (6) equitable resource distribution. An appendix lists the names and affiliations of members of the Commission on Chapter 1. (JB)

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News

Washington, DC

For Immediate Release:

CHAPTER I COMMISSION ISSUES INTERIM REPORT

Washington, DC, April 6, 1992--The independent Commission on Chapter 1 today released an interim report on its work to develop a set of recommendations, by 1993, for the reauthorization of Chapter 1, announced Chairman David W. Hornbeck.

The report comes at mid-point in the Commission's deliberations. Established in December 1990, it will recommend changes in the Chapter 1 section of the Hawkins/Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988 to provide a better education for disadvantaged students. Chapter 1 is the largest program of federal assistance to elementary and secondary education.

Although Commission members say that this report may change, it currently represents the consensus of the Commission on the most critical issues affecting disadvantaged children. Most notable is the issue of the changing dynamics of the modern workplace and the political world which now require of all young people a higher level of knowledge and skills. The Commission is proposing important revisions to assure that all students master the full range of knowledge and skills needed for productive, rewarding lives.

To this end the Commission is developing a framework for the most comprehensive reform of Chapter 1 since the enactment of Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Eduction Act in 1965. At its core, supported by a growing body of research and experience, is the belief that virtually all children can achieve at advanced as well as basic levels.

The report calls for the federal government to take into account the need for broad systemwide changes in public education. The reforms of the framework, which are linked to the national education goals, should be implemented as part of the of the long-acknowledged federal role in addressing the needs of children in poverty, the Commission says.

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The framework envisions an interrelated and interdependent set of reforms of the existing statue, including:

- New standards, set by the states and replacing standardized tests, for "real world competencies" in reading, mathematics, and sciences.
- Greater targeting of Chapter 1 dollars to schools with large concentrations of poverty that encourage schoolwide reforms, resulting in individual student achievement of the standards.
- An infusion of dollars into professional development and school development.
- The development and implementation of a parent involvement program, with a recognition of the critical link between health and social service needs of students attending Chapter 1 schools.
- An outcome-based system of accountability as the basis for stronger utilization of both incentives and sanctions.
- Equitable distribution of state and local resources assuring comparability in vital services among all districts as well as in all schools within each district.

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April 6, 1992

Commission on Chapter 1
Interim Report

I. Introduction

This is an interim report on the work of the independent Commission on Chapter 1. The Commission was established in December, 1990 and is composed of educators, child advocates and researchers.[1] Its mission is to determine how Chapter 1 of the Hawkins/Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988, the largest program of federal assistance to elementary and secondary education, can be reshaped to provide improved learning for disadvantaged students, particularly those who attend schools with large concentrations of poverty. The Commission is in the process of developing a set of recommendations, embodied in a legislative framework,[2] in time for consideration in 1993 when Chapter 1 is scheduled for reauthorization by Congress.

We are distributing this interim report in response to questions from many people who share the Commission's interest in strengthening Chapter 1. The thinking of the Commission is still evolving both as to broad concepts and detail and individual members of the Commission are still weighing their positions on particular issues. Accordingly, the summary that follows is subject to change. Nevertheless, the summary represents the current sense of the Commission on the critical issues of educational reform that affect disadvantaged children.[3]

II. The Need

Over the course of its history, Chapter 1 has had many successes. The legislation has focussed attention and resources on the needs of disadvantaged children. This focus, along with state-level efforts to assure that all high school graduates are proficient in basic skills, has brought progress. Many more young people have mastered basic skills and the gap between disadvantaged youngsters and their more advantaged peers has narrowed.

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[1] Members of the Commission are listed in Appendix A. Commissioners serve in their individual capacities and organizational titles are for identification purposes only. The Commission as a whole is an independent body not affiliated with any other organization. It is supported by the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

[2] The framework when completed will include specific concepts designed to be included in the Chapter 1 reauthorization and in some cases draft statutory language along with explanations of the reasons for the proposed language. By subjecting itself to the discipline of operating in a legislative framework, the Commission seeks to test its ideas for consistency and workability.

[3] Bella Rosenberg disagrees with several analyses and recommendations in this report.

Unfortunately, while these changes were taking place, the rules changed. As dedicated educators were working hard to close the gap in basic skills our national economy shifted dramatically. Mastery of basic skills was no longer sufficient to enable young people to obtain decent jobs and to support their families. The demands of today's workplace and of a more complex economic and political world call on all young people to attain much higher levels of knowledge and skills.

Congress recognized these new realities in its reauthorization of Chapter 1 in 1988, calling for a redirection of program energies toward the attainment of higher order skills. But this redirection has not yet occurred, in part because embedded in Chapter 1 and in the operations of school systems are practices -- such as the measurement of program success by use of low-level norm referenced tests -- that work to impede high level student performance.

During the past two decades much has been learned about strategies that will put us on a course toward achieving the objectives that Congress set forth in 1988 and that the President and the Governors adopted in their statement of national goals in 1990. The Commission has sought to use this knowledge in proposing important revisions to Chapter 1 -- revisions designed to assure that all students master the full range of knowledge and skills needed for them to lead productive and rewarding lives.

III. Philosophy and Goals

The Commission is developing a framework that contemplates the most comprehensive reform of Chapter 1 since the enactment of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1965.

The statutory framework is based on a core belief, which is supported by a growing body of research and experience, that virtually all children can achieve at advanced as well as basic levels. Without diminishing the gains made under Chapter 1 over the years, the new framework recognizes implicitly that too often in the past the program has used a remediation approach predicated on pulling children out of regular school activities with the limited aim of having them acquire only basic skills.

Since much is now known about how children become productive learners, it is important that federal resources for disadvantaged youngsters be redirected in ways that will support use of this knowledge. If disadvantaged youngsters are to have access to genuine educational opportunity, it is equally important that the federal government take into account in reauthorizing Chapter 1 the widely perceived need for major systemwide changes in public education. Such changes include more explicit standards for student performance, enriched curriculum and instruction, enhanced

assessment systems, and school-level accountability for student success, areas in which a consensus has been emerging in the broader education community, as well.

These reforms, which are linked to the national educational goals, are appropriately implemented as part of the long- acknowledged federal role in helping to address the educational needs of children who live in poverty. Indeed, if Chapter 1 is not changed to embody these reforms, a dual standard for meeting the educational needs of poor and affluent children will be perpetuated and widened.

A new Chapter 1 can inspire, challenge and support students, teachers and administrators in their efforts to reform schools and improve learning for all children.

IV. Major Initiatives: How They Connect

To attain the major objective of assisting disadvantaged children to achieve at high levels, the framework envisions an interrelated and interdependent set of reforms of the existing statute.

- The framework proposes that states set new standards for the acquisition of real world competencies in reading, mathematics, science and other subjects, develop new curricula frameworks that will permit students to meet these standards, and design new methods of assessment to measure what students know and can do. This framework would replace the use of standardized, norm-referenced testing as a standard for program success since such testing has operated to thwart the objectives of Chapter 1 by debasing teaching and the curriculum and by accepting the failure of schools to prepare children for productive participation in society.

- The framework calls for greater targetting of Chapter 1 dollars to schools with large concentrations of poverty. At the same time, more Chapter 1 schools will be freed of the need to categorize and limit service to certain children within the school. Schools would be encouraged to undertake schoolwide reforms, free from the temptation or necessity to "pull out" low-achieving students for remediation. In return schools would be expected to assure that each student in the school receive an education that should result in achieving the standards.

- The framework recognizes the critical importance of improved teaching by proposing a major infusion of dollars into professional development and school development. Teachers, parents, and administrators will be involved in identifying needs for assistance and in selecting providers. The framework also provides an enhanced role for local school districts

and state education agencies (SEAs) in identifying quality programs and in disseminating "consumer information" on effective practices to Chapter 1 schools. To accomplish this, the framework would earmark a portion of each SEA and local district award for staff development and school improvement programs.

- The framework also calls for building the capacity of schools in other ways. It contemplates that schools will develop and implement comprehensive parent involvement programs. It also recognizes the critical link between health and education by calling upon school districts and states to address, to the extent possible, the health and social service needs of children attending Chapter 1 schools. Annual reports on health and other barriers to learning are required of each state. The reports will permit the identification of shortcomings in services provided by other state institutions charged with providing for the welfare of children. Chapter 1 funds may be used to coordinate services with other providers.

- The development of high standards and new methods for assessing whether students meet them, along with infusions of aid for professional development and local capacity building, will permit schools and systems to be held accountable for student success. An outcome-based system of accountability will help assure that the focus of Chapter 1 regulation and enforcement will be on the central needs of children.

- An outcome-based system of accountability will also form the basis for new plans of enforcement that utilize both incentives and sanctions. Enforcement plans will be formulated by each state and will call for graduated steps, with technical and planning assistance to schools that need help. Where assistance does not secure positive change states will be called upon to assure, through a variety of means that affected students do not continue to be educated in failing schools. At the same time, states will be asked to develop systems for affording recognition and increased resources to schools that are successful.

- If school systems and schools are to be held accountable, they must have resources to meet their obligations. The framework recognizes that, given the inequitable distribution of state and local resources, the current notion that Chapter 1 provides supplemental aid to disadvantaged children added to a level playing field is a fiction. The framework will call upon each state to assure comparability in vital services among all its districts as well as in all schools within each district.

Summary

In sum, the framework the Commission is developing for a revised Chapter 1 offers more help and flexibility to schools serving concentrations of poor children in return for which stronger school performance will be expected.

The help will come in the form of eliminating funding inequities that now deprive many school systems of the ability to offer vital services, assistance in improving teaching and better organizing the school, additional resources that will enrich the curriculum and instruction, and more flexibility in the use of federal funds, so that children need not be pulled out of classrooms to receive help and schools will not be penalized for success.

The expected return will come in the form of increasing proportions of poor children each year meeting high standards set by each state and assessments that will hold schools and school systems accountable for failures to prepare students with knowledge and skills to meet the demands of today's workplace and society.

The critical question that will be posed in the Chapter 1 reauthorization is whether the nation's professed commitment to the value of public education will be matched by a willingness to make new investments and to take on new responsibilities. The Commission is convinced that if the will can be mustered, the means are at hand for public schools to respond to the needs of all children, rich and poor, and to enable them ultimately to become productive and contributing members of society.

Appendix A

Commission on Chapter 1

Chair

*David W. Hornbeck, David W. Hornbeck and Associates; Baltimore, Maryland

Members

*Cynthia Brown, Director, Resource Center on Educational Equity, Council of Chief State School Officers; Washington, DC

Edgar Cahn--Law Professor, District of Columbia Law School; Washington, DC

Ben Canada--Superintendent of Schools; Jackson, Mississippi

Philip Daro--Director, California Math Project; Davis, CA

*Kati Haycock--American Association for Higher Education; Washington, DC

William Kolberg--President, National Alliance of Business; Washington, DC

Henry Levin--Director, Center for Educational Research at Stanford, Stanford University; Stanford, California

George Madaus--Director, Center for the Study of Testing, Boston College; Boston, Massachusetts

*Phyllis McClure--NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund; Washington, DC

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Susana Navarro--Director, Southwest Center for Academic Excellence; University of Texas at El Paso; El Paso, Texas

Bertha Pendelton--Deputy Superintendent of Schools; San Diego, California

Delia Pompa--Education Director, Children's Defense Fund; Washington, DC

***Steering Committee**

Al Ramirez--Executive Deputy Superintendent, Illinois State Board of Education; Springfield, Illinois

Sharon Robinson--Director, National Center for Innovation; National Education Association; Washington, DC

Bella Rosenberg--Assistant to the President, American Federation of Teachers; Washington, DC

Ramsay Selden, Director, State Education Assessment Center, Council of Chief State School Officers; Washington, DC

Robert Slavin--Director of Elementary School Programs, Center for Research on Effective Schooling for Disadvantaged Students, Johns Hopkins University; Baltimore, MD

James Smith--Senior Vice President, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, Detroit, Michigan

Marshall Smith--Dean, School of Education, Stanford University; Stanford, California

Marc Tucker--President, National Center for Education and the Economy; New York, New York

Brenda Turnbull--Principal, Policy Studies Associates; Washington, DC

Ray Valdivieso--Vice-President, Academy for Educational Development; Washington, DC

*Paul Weckstein--Director, Center for Law and Education; Washington, DC

Anne Wheelock--Senior Policy Analyst, Massachusetts Advocacy Center; Boston, Massachusetts

Robert Witherspoon--Executive Director, National Coalition of Title I/Chapter 1 Parents; Washington, DC

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